

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY	Yugoslavia	REPORT NO.	25X1
SUBJECT 25X1	Observations on the Milovan Djilas Case	DATE DISTR.	19 March 1954
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1. President Tito of Yugoslavia had accepted and was in the process of putting into effect the advice and suggestions of British Labor leaders Clement Attlee, Aneurin Bevan and Morgan Phillips, to set up a more moderate system of government in Yugoslavia along British Socialist lines. Milovan Djilas was appointed by Tito as spokesman and theoretician of the new trend. Tito encouraged Djilas to write and publish articles on the subject in the newspaper Borba.
2. The response of most Yugoslav intellectuals, the youth, and many ranking Army officers to this new departure was most enthusiastic. In opposition to this trend, however, were certain die-hards of the Federation of Yugoslav Communists (FCY), namely, the majority of the Slovene Communist Party leaders, in particular, Edvard Kardelj, Vice President of the Yugoslav Federal Executive Council, and certain unidentified leaders of the Serbian and Montenegrin Communist Parties. (The Serbian Communist Party was split on the question.) The leaders of the Croatian Communist Party were in the majority in favor of the Djilas' proposals. In addition to the aforementioned, Colonel General Ivan Gospnjak, Federal Secretary of Defense and Colonel General Koca Popovic, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, also opposed the trend to democratization. Of the opposition group the strongest critics were Kardelj and Mosa Pijade, Vice President of the Federal Executive Council, who succeeded Djilas as President of the Yugoslav Federal Assembly.¹

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3. The opposition of this group became so strong that Tito was forced to abandon his defense of the new trend and to sacrifice both Djilas and Tito's biographer Vladimir Dedijer, who supported Djilas.
4. The role of Soviet pressure is not to be ignored in any consideration of the Djilas' affair. The renewal of diplomatic relations with the Satellite countries and the exchange of ambassadors between the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia strengthened the hand of the Tito and Djilas' opponents. The reasoning behind this conclusion is as follows:

The policy of the Yugoslav Government is to remain entirely neutral and aloof from direct participation in any action which would definitely commit the country to either East or West. However, because of Yugoslavia's chaotic economic situation, the regime must accept Western military and economic aid, to which, however, no political strings are attached. Since acceptance of such aid does not compromise the neutrality of Yugoslavia, no harm is done to the internal strength of the regime. On the other hand, the regime must take no steps to introduce any vestige of "Western Democracy" into the country, i.e., to lessen the control of the FCY. To do this would antagonize the Eastern bloc and definitely commit Yugoslavia to the Western camp. To adopt the measures proposed by Djilas and supported by Tito would have resulted in the loss of Yugoslavia's neutral position and would have promoted an increase in antagonism from the East, with which formal relations had recently been stabilized.

5. In sum, the renunciation of Djilas' reform proposals is a defeat for the Yugoslav Army and for Tito himself, and a victory for the extreme left wing of the FCY.

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1. Comment: [redacted]
- the fact that Tito and Djilas favored a rapprochement with the West but were strongly opposed by leaders of the Slovene Communist Party, headed by Edvard Kardelj, who advocated an independent policy and complete neutrality for Yugoslavia. This faction was successful in gaining the support of the Communist Party in Serbia, led by Petar Stambolic and Svetozar Vukmanovic-Tempo. The Kardelj group is considered in control of the "Yugoslav situation". According to this report, the open rift between Kardelj and Djilas began in June - July 1953.

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- Comment: [redacted] the purge of Milovan Djilas resulted from the pressure of the combined provincial apparatus of the FCY, led by the Croatian faction, inasmuch as the provincial apparatus are still heavily imbued with Bolshevik ideology, whereas the central apparatus of the FCY is more tolerant and oriented toward winning the West.

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